IN THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 6 of the specification, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 10 as follows:

Figs. 2a through 2d ~~2a through 2e~~ are diagrams illustrating the G.709 optical data unit (ODU) frame structure, and the ODU, optical channel payload unit (OPU), and optical channel transport unit (OTU) overhead.

On page 7 of the specification, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 8 as follows:

Figs. 2a through 2d ~~2a through 2e~~ are diagrams illustrating the G.709 optical data unit (ODU) frame structure, and the ODU, optical channel payload unit (OPU), and optical channel transport unit (OTU) overhead. More specifically, a frame is shown that is composed of 4 rows. In a G.709 compliant system, it is normal to provide read access to all 64 of the G.709 overhead bytes by dropping them to the user interface during each frame. Alternately stated, 16 overhead bytes are dropped from each row and 64 overhead bytes are dropped from each frame.

On pages 8 and 9 of the specification, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 21 of page 8 as follows:

Returning again to Figs. 2c and 2d ~~Fig. 2e~~, the processor supplies trail trace identifier (TTI) overhead bytes every frame that can be of particular interest with respect to the present invention. The TTI byte is shown located in the first byte of every tandem connection monitor (TCM) message. There are six TCM messages located in row 2, columns 5 through

13 and row 3, columns 1 through 8. When TTI bytes are being collected for the overhead message, the TTI bytes are collected for a second number of frames, where the second number is equal to 64 frames. The message buffer 116 in Fig. 1 accepts at least one trail trace identifier (TTI) byte every frame to create an overhead message from storing the second number of collected TTI bytes. In some aspects of the system 100, more than one TTI byte is accepted every frame. From 1 to 8 TTI bytes can be collected every frame.